

## Let It Be Me by Eddie\_KaspbrakTozier

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**Summary:**

Richie is sick. Eddie takes care of him. Fluff, so much fluff.

# Let It Be Me

## Author's Note:

Hello, my friends! This is a direct sequel to "It Was Always You." For those of you who are new to the series, this is the second part of a 5-part series following Richie and Eddie through their relationship after escaping Niebolt street.

I recommend reading it, if you haven't already, so you fully understand where they are in their relationship, but this can be read as a one-shot (as there is not much of a plot, just pure fluff).

Title inspired by "Let It Be Me" by Ray LaMontagne (cause I suck at titles): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5LWpw3CMCEg>

Enjoy!

Let It Be Me

Eddie's POV

Something warm presses up against Eddie's back. Eddie hums lightly as he snuggles his head deeper into his pillow, enjoying the extra warmth and pressure. He feels so relaxed and comfortable he doesn't ever want to move.

Then, something wet starts raining down on his face. It feels nice, but the wetness is a sharp contrast against the warmth of his skin. It starts to pull Eddie out of his deep, blissful sleep. Eddie's mind is fuzzy from the last bits of sleep that are still clinging to him; he has no idea what *wet* thing could possibly be falling on his face. Could there be a leak in the house? God, Myra is going to freak the *fuck* out. She's going to think the roof is going to come down right on top of their heads.

Eddie groans and slowly opens his eyes. God, he really doesn't want to deal with Myra freaking out this early in the morning.

"Hey, sleepy-head.", says a deep voice.

Huh. That is definitely not Myra.

Eddie pushes up to flip onto his back and turns toward the voice. Eddie's greeted with the gorgeous sight of Richie Tozier. Richie's hair is a complete mess; he has a major five o'clock shadow, his glasses are lopsided on his face, and he's grinning from ear to ear.

Well, *hello*. Eddie now realizes what, or who, woke him up.

A wide grin spreads across Eddie's face. "Hi."

"Hi." Richie says before he leans down and kisses Eddie. Eddie's hands automatically dive into Richie's hair.

Eddie remembers now he's in Richie's home in Malibu. After they left Ben's vacation home in Cape Cod, which they were visiting for Thanksgiving, they flew directly to Los Angeles. They've been here for about two weeks, slowly trying to get back to their normal, everyday lives.

Richie pulls back from the kiss and props his head up on his hand. "How'd you sleep?"

"Hmm, good." Eddie just stares up at Richie, enjoying the view.

Richie scoffs. "Oh, yeah? Well you think you might be able to share the covers sometime? Cause I keep waking up in the middle of the night to find you wrapped up like a fucking cocoon."

"Well, that sounds like your fucking problem." Eddie gives Richie a shit eating grin.

Richie huffs hot air onto Eddie's face. "Man, I'm starting to regret sharing my bed with you."

Eddie rolls his eyes. "No, you're not. I wake up every morning to you

cuddling and kissing me.”

“Well, I can’t help it. You look so cute when you’re sleeping.”

“Don’t call me cute.” Eddie lightly pushes Richie’s shoulder, but Richie doesn’t notice.

Richie curls his body up against Eddie’s, resting his head on Eddie’s chest. Eddie’s hand cups the back of Richie’s head, Eddie rests his own head against the top of Richie’s. A peaceful silence falls as they cuddle with each other.

Eddie loves mornings with Richie. Every morning, Eddie wakes up to Richie cuddling and kissing him. It makes Eddie feel so loved and wanted. After lazy morning kisses, they cuddling for a little bit while they talk about what they’re going to do that day.

“You’re meeting with Liam today, right?”, Eddie says as he lightly runs his hand up and down Richie’s back.

Richie borrows his face into Eddie’s chest and hums.

“Shouldn’t you be heading out soon?” Eddie glances at the clock.

“Uggg, I don’t want to get up!” Richie curls tighter around Eddie. “I just want to cuddle!”

Eddie chuckles. “Oh my god, Richie.” Eddie half-heartedly tries to push Richie off of him. “Come on, I don’t want to be the reason why you’re late for your meeting.”

“Just five more minutes! Pleassee!” Richie pouts, giving me full on puppy dog eyes.

Eddie rolls his eyes, but he’s smiling. “Fine, but then you’re getting your ass up and getting in the shower.”

Richie grins widely and then shoves his nose into the crook of Eddie’s neck. Eddie smiles as he wraps his arms around Richie, pulls him close, and rubs his nose into Richie’s hair, breathing in his scent. Yeah, mornings with Richie are the *fucking best*.

Eddie lets time stretch to ten minutes before he kicks Richie out of bed. Once Richie's lazy ass is in the shower, Eddie pads into the kitchen to make a pot of coffee.

Richie's home is tucked into the Malibu hills. It's a modern two-bedroom ranch style home surrounded by succulents and olive trees. The inside has gorgeous cherry wood beams spanning the ceiling and the wood flooring is covered in plush, toe-curling rugs. The home is warm and inviting, but it's not obvious Richie lives here. It just doesn't reflect his personality or flare. Richie's admitted to hiring an interior decorator, cause, as he put it "the house would just look like a fucking college student lived there" if he decorated it himself.

Eddie turns on the coffee maker, leans against the kitchen counter, and stares out the window. It's early in the morning, but it's darker than usual outside, mainly due to the dark storm clouds blanketing the sky. Eddie makes a mental note to make sure Richie takes an umbrella with him.

By the time Richie walks into the kitchen Eddie's pouring coffee into a tumbler for him. Richie's hair is still wet; he's wearing an orange button-up shirt which is popping up through a faded blue pull-over sweater, all on top of dark jeans. Richie's eyes are bleary behind his glasses; he didn't even bother shaving his stubble.

Eddie hands Richie the tumbler with one hand; his other hands rubs along Richie's chin feeling its roughness.

"Oh my god, Rich, you're a disaster." Eddie snorts. He pushes up on his toes to plant a kiss on Richie's lips.

"Shut the fuck up." Richie grins and then plants a long kiss to Eddie's lips. Eddie close his eyes enjoying the softness of Richie's lips and the roughness of his stubble.

Eddie pulls back. "Ok, get your ass moving."

"Fine, fine! Jesus." Richie moves to the front door and grabs his keys.

"You should take an umbrella. It looks it's going to rain today.", Eddie says as he sips from his coffee mug.

Richie pauses in the middle of toeing his shoes on. “Uhhhhh...”

“Oh my god, Richie.” Eddie pinches his nose in disbelief. “Please tell me you own an umbrella.”

“Uhhhhhhhh...”

“Richie!”

“What!? It’s California! It never fucking rains here!”, Richie shrugs.

“Well, it’s going to fucking rain today! What, are you just going to walk around and get soaking wet!?” Eddie’s waving his free hand around, like he’s trying to bat away Richie’s stupidity.

“Wha-! No! I’m going to hide inside like a fucking child and then sprint to my fucking car when there’s a break in the rain. Like everyone does! Duh!”

“Oh, Jesus fucking Christ!” Eddie huffs in exasperation. He semi-slams his coffee mug on the kitchen counter, leaving it there as he walks to their bedroom. When Eddie comes out, he’s holding an umbrella and a rain coat. Eddie shoves them into Richie’s chest.

“Here! This is called an umbrella. You open it to block the rain so you don’t get wet.”

“I don’t think I’m responsible enough to take care of Eddie Kaspbrak’s *personal* umbrella and rain coat.” Richie grins as he puts on Eddie’s coat.

“Shut the fuck up, Richie.”

Richie zips up the rain coat. “Alright, Eddie Spaghetti!” Richie grabs the back of Eddie’s head and pulls him into a kiss. “I’ll be back before you know it! Love you!”, Richie says before sprinting out the door.

And with that Eddie’s left alone, feeling breathless from Richie’s kiss and words.

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A howling sound reverberates through the living room. From where Eddie's sitting on the couch, folding laundry, he can see rain beating against the windows. It's completely dark outside and the trees are swaying violently side to side.

Eddie turns his attention back to the TV, which is playing the evening news; the weather report comes on, warning about a storm that's going to hit the coast that evening. Eddie rolls his eyes as he folds one of Richie's shirts – he didn't need to watch the news to know it's how fucking gross it is outside.

Eddie peeks at the clock and wonders where Richie could possibly be. Once Richie was done with his meeting, he texted Eddie to let him know he's on his way home, but that was almost two hours ago. He should have been home by now.

Eddie feels his stomach start to twist into a knot. What if something happened to Richie while he was driving back from his meeting? He could have gotten into a car accident; Californians are terrible drivers to being with, but they lose their fucking minds when it starts to rain. Eddie's anxiety increases as more and more terrible thoughts fly by in his mind. The more anxious he gets, the clumsier his folding becomes.

His train of thought is suddenly broken by the sound of the front door opening. Eddie's anxiety instantly evaporates. Eddie smiles as he puts down a shirt he's folding.

"Hi, Rich. How was your meeting?", Eddie yells.

Richie stumbles into the living room. He drops Eddie's umbrella, which is turned completely inside outside onto the ground. Richie leans up against the doorway to the living room and props his arm and head against the doorway. He looks miserable and completely worn out.

"Good, good." Richie shrugs. "Liam liked the stuff I showed him, but

he thinks I need to rework the ending a little bit.”

“Hmm.” Eddie looks Richie up and down. Richie’s pale and he has beads of sweat lining his forehead and temples. Richie does have multiple layers of clothing on, along with Eddie’s rain coat, but he shouldn’t be sweating after just coming in from the cold rain.

Richie sluggishly pulls himself up, walks behind their L-shaped couch, and leans over its back. He lightly pulls on Eddie’s shirt sleeve as a big, stupid grin spreads on his face. “Umm, excuse me. Are these mine?”

Eddie’s wearing an oversized graphic t-shirt along with grey sweat pants – both of which are Richie’s. Eddie’s started to wear Richie’s clothing around the house – he likes how they smell like Richie and how big they are on him, which mean they don’t irritate his stitches.

“Yeah, well, they’re mine now.” Eddie snarks.

Richie’s grin somehow gets even wider and then he’s leaning down further, his lips puckered. Eddie’s eyes go wide. Eddie plants his hand fully over Richie’s face, leaving Richie’s puckered lips sticking out between Eddie’s thumb and index finger. Richie blinks repeatedly as he looks down at Eddie in confusion.

“You feelin’ ok, Rich?” Eddie feels the heat simmering underneath Richie’s skin. He moves his hand up to Richie’s forehead. “Holy shit, Rich. You’re burning up!”

“Really? I actually feel really cold. The office was blowing the fucking AC, even though it’s like fifty fucking degrees outside.” Richie grabs Eddie’s hand from his forehead and moves it to his cheek. Richie holds it there, enjoying the warm.

Eddie caresses Richie’s cheek. “Rich, I think you might have a fever.”

“Nnnnoooo!” Richie groans. He crumples in on himself and plants his face into the cushions so he’s folded in half over the back of the couch.

With a loud sigh, Eddie stands up and goes around the couch so he’s next to Richie. He runs a soothing hand up and down Richie’s back.



“Oh my god, Rich, don’t be such a baby.” Eddie pats Richie on the back. “Let me take your thermometer.”

Richie stands up straight and looks at Eddie. “You’re going to take care of me, Dr. K?”

“Someone has to take care of your sorry ass. Now, come on.” Eddie grabs Richie’s hand and guides him toward the bedroom.

Once they reach their bedroom, Richie flops down on the bed as Eddie goes into their bathroom to find the thermometer. He finds it in the first aid kit he brought with him when he moved in. Eddie goes back into their bedroom to find Richie curled up into a tight ball on top of the bed covers, facing away from Eddie. Eddie crawls onto the bed behind Richie and bends over him.

“Rich, can you sit up so I can take your temperature?”, Eddie says softly.

Richie moans into the pillow, turns and sits up so he’s propped up against the pillows. Instead of simply taking the thermometer from Eddie, he opens his mouth wide and unrolls his tongue so it’s sticking out, flopping against his chin. He’s looking expectantly at Eddie.

Eddie glares daggers at him. He wants to just shove the thermometer down Richie’s throat, but he manages to keep his frustration in check and places it in Richie’s mouth. He places one hand under Richie’s jaw and with a fast, upward motion snaps Richie’s mouth shut.

“Now, make sure it’s underneath your tongue. Otherwise, it won’t be accurate.”

Richie starts to open his mouth, probably to make a snarky remark.

“And keep your fucking mouth shut!” Eddie snaps Richie’s mouth shut again. “*Jesus.*”

Richie glares at Eddie as he leans back against the pillows. Richie entwines his fingers on top of his stomach and twirls his thumbs, simply waiting for the ‘beep, beep, beep’ of the thermometer. Eddie rolls his eyes. He stares out the window, listening to the falling rain, while he runs his hand up and down Richie’s thigh.

The thermometer beeps. Eddie pulls it out of Richie's mouth. "Yup, 102.5."

Richie groans loudly. "Uhhhh, I guess that explains why I feel like I'm dying.", Richie moans.

"You're not *dying*. You just have the flu." Eddie shakes his head. God, Richie's so fucking whiny when he's sick. "Do you want to just stay in bed?"

"Noooo, that's so boring. I fucking hate being sick cause all you end up doing is lying around."

"Jesus, it's not supposed to be exciting, Richie. Why don't I run you a bath? I'll make you dinner while you're in there. You'll feel a lot better once you're warm and have some food in you.", Eddie says.

Richie nods in agreement. He looks a little dumbfounded, as if he's surprised by this kind of attention and care.

Eddie's heart pangs at the thought. "Ok, just lay down here while I go run the bath." Eddie quickly cards his fingers through Richie's hair and then he scoots off the bed and goes into the bathroom.

Eddie places the stopper in the drain of the wide, white bathtub and starts running the water. He leaves his hand under the cascading water waiting until it's the perfect temperature. Once it's the ideal temperature, he dries his hands, and then stares at the water as it slowly fills the tub.

Eddie's trying to keep his frantic, feverish mind from running away from him. 102.5 is high, but it's not dangerous. At least, not yet. Eddie doesn't want to make it into a bigger deal than it is, but there's a part of him that wants to pump Richie full of drugs and rush him to the ER. Eddie takes a deep breath, trying to calm that part of himself. He promises himself that if Richie's temperature goes up to 104, he'll take him to the ER. Until then, he'll take care of Richie the best he can.

Eddie turns off the faucet and walks back into the bedroom. Richie is still lying on the bed; his eyes are closed and he's curled around a

pillow which he's squeezing against his chest. Eddie sits on the edge of the bed, and runs his hand up and down Richie's arm.

"Rich.", Eddie whispers. "Your bath is ready."

Richie squints up at Eddie over the top of the pillow. Richie mumbles unintelligently into the pillow. He shakes his head and then pulls his chin over the pillow to speak properly. "Thanks, Dr. K. I would give you a big smooch," Richie says, puckering his lips like a fish, "but I know you would throw me off the bed, even in your injured state."

"Damn straight." Eddie smiles down at Richie. "Do you...uhh-" Eddie pauses; his cheeks take on a pink hue. "Do you need help...or anything?"

Eddie and Richie have been together for a little over a month, but their physical relationship only consists of light make-out sessions and cuddling. Even after getting together they've only seen each other bare from the waist up. Each one, getting ready for bed in the bathroom or when the other one is brushing their teeth. Eddie's face gets even darker just thinking about seeing the rest of Richie's body.

Richie doesn't seem to notice Eddie floundering though as he's slinks off the bed and shuffles toward the bathroom. "Nah. Don't worry your pretty little head about it, Eds."

"Oh...ok. I'm - I'm going to go make you some dinner, then."

Richie turns back to look at Eddie; he leans against the bathroom door which is propped open. "Thanks, babe." Richie blows Eddie a kiss and then closes the door.

Eddie blinks at the door dumbly. His mind starts to drift, thinking about what is happening behind the door; Richie pulling his sweat soaked shirt up and over his head exposing his - Eddie shakes his head violently, dissipating all thoughts that were starting to form in the back of his mind. That's right, Eddie needs to get moving. He has a job to do!

With a new found conviction, Eddie rises off the bed and pads into the kitchen. Once his apron is tightly secured, he pulls ingredients

out to make home-made chicken noddle soup. None of that gross canned soup for his Richie, no thank you! Eddie pulls apart left-over chicken and chops away at carrots.

While it's true Richie's a whiny asshole when he's sick, Eddie finds he kind of likes taking care of Richie. It's nice to know Richie trusts Eddie to take care of him. It's like Richie *needs* Eddie, like he's the *only one* that make Richie feel better again. It feels so good to be needed and wanted in that way; for someone to rely whole heartedly on you. Eddie's never experienced anything like it before, it's fills him with a feeling of control and power. Richie only needs Eddie to take care of him; he doesn't need anything else or anyone else. Eddie can provide Richie with everything he needs-

Eddie's hand pauses in the middle of cutting a carrot. HOLY FUCK. He sounds like his fucking mother! Oh fuck. Fuckity, fuck, fuck, fuck. Eddie's chest starts to heave, his breath getting shorter and shorter. He drops the knife; it falls and clangs against the wood flooring. Eddie frantically reaches into his pocket for his inhaler. He cringes remembering his inhaler is long gone. Eddie slowly pulls his hand out of his pocket and places both hands, palms down, on the kitchen counter. He takes a couple long, deep breaths. In and out. In and out.

He's not his mother! He's not! It's just, taking care of Richie when he's sick is just another way for him to show Richie how much he cares for him. Just knowing that Richie is as content as possible – he's warm, comfortable, and has a belly full of good food – makes Eddie feel good. All he wants if for Richie to feel good.

Sure, there's a part of him that likes the fact that Richie wants Eddie to take care of him, but that's normal for people who are in a relationship, right? It feels good knowing your partner trusts and depends on you, especially when they're at their lowest. It's not like he wants Richie to be sick *forever*. He wants Richie to feel better! Which is something he can't say about how his Ma treated him.

Eddie's breathing is becoming steadier now, he's through the worst of it. When he's confident he can hold a knife without cutting off one of his fingers, he picks it up from the floor. After cleaning it, Eddie finishes cutting the carrots and then dumps everything into the boiling pot, leaving it to simmer.

As he takes off and folds his apron, he gets an idea. He pops his head into the bedroom, peaking to see if Richie's out of the bath yet. He finds the bathroom door is still closed. Good.

Eddie tip-toes over to Richie's dresser. He kneels in front of it and slowly pulls the lowest drawer open. Richie's clothes are bursting out of the drawer, the clothes having been crumpled into wads and stuffed into drawer. With a scowl, Eddie pulls out a pair of sweat pants and a t-shirt he's seen Richie wear to bed before. He shuffles out of the bedroom quickly, stuffs them into the dryer, and then goes back to check on the soup.

Deeming the soup to be almost done, he goes back to pull Richie's clothes out of the dryer. The clothes are warm in Eddie's hands. Eddie smiles as he imagines Richie, dressed in his pajamas, borrowing into a blanket to keep the warmth contained. Eddie folds the clothes into perfect squares and lies them on the bed.

Eddie knocks lightly on the bathroom door. "Rich? I left some clothes on the bed for you to put on after you get out."

"Ooooh. Something naughty, I hope." Richie says, his voice muffled by the door.

"Oh my god." Eddie rolls his eyes and walks back into the kitchen.

Eddie's sipping a spoon-full of soup when Richie walks into the kitchen. His skin is red from the bath and the curls the bottom of his neck are damp. He's even dressed in the sweat pants and t-shirt Eddie put out for him.

"Oh my god, Eddie! These feel fucking amazing! What the fuck did you do!?", Richie says as his hands run up and down his clothes. He does a little twirl as if he's showing off a new pair of designer clothes.

"Oh my gosh, Rich, I just put them in the dryer to get them warm.", Eddie laughs.

"Now I want all my clothes to be warmed up!"

"Well, no fucking way that is happening." Eddie scoffs. Eddie walks over to Richie and starts shooing him out of the kitchen. "Alright, go

lie down, you big idiot. I'll bring your dinner out to you. Go, go."

"Oh my gosh, what *service!*", Richie says in a high-pitched voice.

"Go! God, you're annoying." Eddie says with a light laugh as he pushes Richie out of the kitchen. Eddie follows Richie into the living room, wanting to see with his own eyes that Richie's going to lie down. Eddie lightly shoves Richie down onto their couch.

"God, Eds. You don't need to manhandle me. Although, I admit, I kinda like it." Richie wiggles his eyebrows up and down as he adjusts himself on the couch, piling up pillows behind his head to rest on.

"Just shut up, Richie." Eddie huffs.

Eddie goes back into the kitchen and pours a bowl of soup. Even though he's only been gone for a couple of minutes, when he comes back into the living room, he finds Richie curled up on his side with his eyes closed.

Eddie lightly shakes Richie's shoulder. "Rich, you need to eat something."

Richie eye's flutter open. "Hmm, that smells good." Richie sits up and takes the bowl from Eddie. "Thanks." Richie slurps the soup, trying not to spill any on the couch. Normally, Eddie would make him move to the kitchen table to eat, but Eddie wants to make sure Richie's as comfortable as possible.

Eddie's hand slips underneath the cuff of one of Richie's pant legs, the elastic loose from years of being worn, to slide his hand up to the lower part of Richie's calf. Eddie moves his thumb in a slow, delicate circle across Richie's skin. Richie hums in pleasure around a spoon full of soup.

Richie finishes the bowl and hands it back to Eddie. "Thanks, Eds. You take such good care of me." Richie makes a kissy face at Eddie.

"Of course, you dufus." Eddie takes the bowl with one hand while he pushes Richie back down with his free hand. "Now, rest."

As Eddie's cleaning up in the kitchen, he suddenly hears heavy

footsteps followed by the slamming of a door. Eddie puts down the bowl he's washing in the sink.

"Rich? Are you ok?" No response from the living room. "Rich?"

With his anxiety raising, Eddie walks into the living room to find it empty. Richie is nowhere to be found. What in the world? Where the fuck could he have gone? Eddie walks to the door of their bedroom but Richie's not there either. It's then, Eddie notices the door to the bathroom is closed. *Oh no.*

Eddie glances at the floor. Yup, just as he thought. There is a trail of wet, chunky throw up leading from their bedroom doorway all the way to the bathroom door. If Eddie looks closely, he can actually see solid chunks of chicken from the soup he just made. Holy fuck, that is fucking *disgusting!* Eddie starts to retch but he quickly clamps a hand over his mouth. Eddie takes a few deep breaths to get his stomach under control.

He tip-toes across the room, jumping here and there so he doesn't step in any of it. When he makes it to the bathroom door he knocks lightly. "Rich? You ok?" Eddie hears a deep moan from the other side of the doorway.

"Rich, I'm going to come in, ok?" Eddie cracks the door open to find Richie kneeling in front of the toilet, his head resting on the rim of the bowl. "Rich? Are you ok?"

Eddie tip-toes around more throw up to kneel behind Richie. He places a reassuring hand against Richie's back, which is soaked in sweat, and rubs up and down. "Rich?"

Richie slowly lifts one hand, flushes the toilet, and turns his head, which is still resting on the rim of the toilet bowl, to face Eddie. His face is even paler than before, his forehead has beads of sweat dripping down it, and there is throw up on the corners of his mouth.

"Hey, Eds.", Richie says weakly.

"Holy fuck, Richie. What happened?"

"Oh, you know, one minute I'm napping on the couch and then the

next I feel like hurling my guts out. I tried to make it here before I threw up, but I wasn't too successful. Sorry about that." Richie looks guiltily at Eddie.

"It's ok. Don't worry about it. Here, let's get you cleaned up." Eddie stands, grabs two hand towels, and quickly runs them under the bathroom sink.

Eddie crouches back down next to Richie, he places one hand at the back of Richie's neck and gingerly pulls Richie's head up. Eddie tenderly wipes Richie's mouth. He throws the dirty hand towel into the sink and then holds the other towel to Richie's forehead.

"Ahhh." Richie sighs. "That feels so much better than the fucking toilet bowl." Richie places a hand on top of Eddie's hand holding the towel. Richie gives Eddie a look of pure love and adoration.

"Well, duh." A flush paints Eddie's cheek as a smile spreads across his face. "God, you're a mess, Rich. You need to get changed and then go the fuck to bed."

This time Richie doesn't argue. Eddie helps him stand up and walks him to their bed. Rich starts to change out of his sweat soaked clothes as Eddie goes to get cleaning supplies from the kitchen. Eddie comes back to find a large Richie-size bump underneath the covers. Eddie chuckles; he knows Richie must be feeling awful but it's kind of cute how he's burrowed himself under the covers.

Eddie places the bucket of cleaning supplies on the floor. He walks to the bed and lifts the covers to slide in next to Richie. He knows he needs to clean up the disaster that is their bedroom floor, but he can spare a few minutes to cuddle with Richie. You know, just until Richie falls asleep.

Richie automatically turns towards Eddie. Eddie pulls Richie's head into the crook of his neck, one hand plays with the curls at the bottom of Richie's neck, while his other arm wraps around Richie's back. Richie gently winds his arms around Eddie's torso.

Richie hums into Eddie's neck. "Sorry about the mess."



“Stop apologizing.” Eddie quickly pecks a kiss to Richie’s temple. “I’m use to you throwing up by now. You do it often enough.”

Richie just hums into Eddie’s neck. Eddie feels Richie relax in his arms as he slowly drifts off to sleep. Eddie would be happy if he could live in this moment forever.

Eddie wasn’t a big cuddlier when he was with Myra. It just wasn’t a pleasurable experience; the heat of cuddling with would create a layer a sweat across his skin, which would then start to mix with Myra’s sweat. *Fucking gross*. Eddie just thought he just wasn’t into cuddling, but yet again, Eddie’s been proven wrong, because he fucking loves cuddling with Richie. He doesn’t care who’s the big spoon and who’s the little spoon, it’s fucking fantastic either way. He loves the feel of Richie’s skin against his, and how the warmth of Richie’s body heat completely encompasses him, like he can physically feel Richie’s love for him. And, god, Eddie loves how Richie smells. It’s something so unique to him; Eddie can’t get enough of it.

Eddie can feel himself starting to drift off to sleep. Richie’s so warm against him and Riche’s rhythmic breathing is starting to pull Eddie under. Eddie slowly pulls away from Richie. Once Eddie’s disentangling himself, he takes a moment to stare down at Richie’s sleeping form.

Richie’s face is flushed from his fever and his lips are slightly parted. God, even when he’s sick, Richie’s handsome. Eddie has no idea how someone like Richie – fucking hot, funny, and a such a pain in the ass - could fall in love with someone like him. Eddie’s heart starts to swell thinking about how happy he has been since being with Richie. Before the feeling starts to overwhelm him, he kisses Richie on the forehead and gets out of bed.

Ok, time to deal with this fucking mess. Eddie suits up into an apron and rubber gloves. He gets on his knees, which fucking hurts because of his stitches, and starts to wipe, spray, and scrub his way across the bedroom carpet, slowly making his way to the bathroom. It takes him a full hour and a half for him to clean everything to his satisfaction.

Eddie is fucking exhausted now. His entire body hurts from kneeling

on the floor, and he has zero appetite from cleaning up puke. Eddie changes into his pajamas, which are also Richie's, and slides in next to Richie. Richie's turned away from him, curled into a fetal position. Eddie scoots up against Richie's back and curls around him. Eddie rests his nose in-between Richie's shoulder blades to breathe in Richie's scent. Eddie quickly drifts off to sleep.

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Eddie wakes up to a coldness surrounding him. The bedroom is completely dark, the only sound is the pounding of the rain against the window. Eddie reaches out to the other side of the bed but it's cold and empty. Eddie sits up in bed as he tries to blink away the sleep that's still clinging to him.

"Rich?," Eddie whispers. No response.

Eddie throws back the covers and gets out of bed. Holy fuck. It's fucking cold. Eddie grabs a sweater that's draped over the bed frame. Again, it's another one of Richie's.

Eddie pads into the hallway. He doesn't see any lights on in the house. Where could Richie have gone to this time?

Eddie walks into the living room. "Rich?" This time, he hears a faint groan.

Eddie flips on a lamp to find Richie lying on the couch. He's surrounded by pillows and is completely enveloped in a blanket. The only part of Richie that's actually visible are his eyes, which are peering out of a little opening in the blanket folds. Eddie sits on the couch next to Richie.

"Hey." Eddie says gently as he places a comforting hand on top on the bundle that is Richie.

Richie adjusts the blanket so it's not covering his mouth. "Hey, Spaghetti." His voice is weak.

“Rich, what are you doing out here?”

“I couldn’t sleep. I woke up in the middle of the night cause my stomach was bothering me. I just kept tossin’ and turn. I didn’t want to wake you up, so I came out here.”

Eddie pulls back the blanket that’s surrounding Richie’s face. He runs his hand through Richie’s hair. He can feel the heat radiating off of Richie.

“You should have woken me up.”

The blanket shifts as Richie shrugs. “You looked so peaceful. I knew you must be exhausted from cleaning up my mess. You need to get your rest; you’re still healing.”

“God, Rich, you can be such an idiot sometimes.”

Richie frowns. “Hey! Be nice! I’m sick, you know.” Richie pouts.

“Yeah, yeah.” Eddie smiles down at Richie.

Richie grins back before his face takes on a worried look. “You’re not going to make me take Pepto, are you?”

“Damn straight I am.”

Richie groans and yanks the blanket back over this head. “NOOoooo!”

“God, I can’t believe I’m dating such a baby.” Eddie laughs as he goes to the bedroom, grabs the Pepto, and returns to the living room.

Eddie tries to pull the blanket off of Richie, but Richie has wound the blanket tight around himself.

“Oh my god, you big baby.”, Eddie laughs. “It’s not that bad.” Eddie manages to yank the blanket away from Richie’s face. “You’re going to feel better; I promise.”

Richie huffs as he relents. He yanks the cup of Pepto out of Eddie’s hand and slings it back like a shot. Richie shallows with a look of

pure disgust on his face.

“There. Happy?” Richie glares at Eddie as he slams the empty cup onto the coffee table in front of the couch.

Eddie can’t help but grin. “Yes. Yes, I am.” Eddie pulls back the blanket wrapped around Richie’s body. “Is there room in there for me?”

Richie beams as he untangles himself from the blanket and scoots over to wedge himself into the corner of their L-shaped couch. Eddie crawls onto the couch and lays down on his back. They pull the blanket over them, tucking in the corners to prevent the cold from creeping into their warm cocoon. Once Eddie’s comfortable he pulls Richie down to hug him against his chest. Fuck his stitches, Eddie’s just wants to hold Richie in his arms right now.

Richie nuzzles his head into Eddie’s chest and whispers, “I love you so much, Eds.”

Eddie’s heart leaps into throat. He squeezes his eyes shut; his body feels like it’s full of electricity. *Fuck, fuck, fuck*. This isn’t the first time this has happened. Since getting together Richie has said “I love you” every day since they’ve gotten together, whether it’s when he’s running out the door or when they’re wrapped up in each other’s arms, and every time Eddie’s heart leaps into his throat, choking him, making it impossible to say it back. Eddie knows he cares deeply for Richie, but he’s doesn’t know if he’s *in love* with Richie. Eddie, honestly, doesn’t know what it means to really be *in love* someone. Is this what love feels like?

Since Eddie has lost all control over his mouth, he starts to pepper kisses all over Richie’s face – his cheeks, his forehead, his jaw, his nose. Richie literally giggles. Eddie thinks he might be addicted to the sound. Eddie continues to rain more kisses down on Richie’s face; Eddie wants Richie to know how much he cares for him, even if he can’t find the courage to say it out loud yet.

Eddie transitions from quick pecks to slow, tender-filled kisses which causes Richie’s laughter to shift to a faint sigh.

“Just for the record”, Eddie says as he continues planting slow kisses on Richie’s face. “You should have woken me up. I don’t like the fact you were out here, suffering, while I was lying comfortably in bed.”

Richie props himself up on one arm so he’s looking down at Eddie. Richie’s cheeks are stained red; Eddie doesn’t know it if it’s from the fever or from the attention Eddie’s been giving him.

“I didn’t want to bother you.”, Richie mumbles.

Eddie rolls his eyes to the ceiling. “Jesus fucking Christ, Richie.” Eddie grabs the back of Richie’s neck and pulls him forward. Eddie plants a long passionate kiss to Richie’s cheek. Eddie pulls back, keeping his hold on the back of Richie’s neck; he wants to make sure Richie’s looking directly at him, because he doesn’t want to repeat himself.

“Richie, I can’t believe I have to fucking explain this to you.” Eddie takes a deep breath and then stares directly into Richie’s eyes. “I’m your boyfriend, right?”

Richie’s eyes go wide. They’ve never officially talked about how they want to refer to each other – boyfriend, partner, etc. – but Eddie doesn’t want to be bothered with that conversation right now.

“I’m your boyfriend, *right*, Rich?” Eddie’s glaring daggers at Richie.

Richie quickly nods his head. “Yeah, yeah, fuck yeah.”

“Good. Now, being your boyfriend means that I care about you; even though sometimes you drive me up a fucking wall. Regardless though, I fucking care about you-” Eddie gulps. “-like a lot, ok?” Eddie can feel tears starting to well up in his eyes. “I - I want you to be happy, healthy, and – fuck - I want you to get everything your heart desires. Cause you know what? That makes *me* happy.”

At this point, he can see tears starting to form in Richie’s eyes. Eddie takes another deep breath as he moves his hands from the back of Richie’s neck to cup his cheeks.

“What doesn’t make me happy is when you’re sad or when you’re hurt,” tears start to trickle down Eddie’s cheeks. “It kills me when

you feel this way. All I want to do is make you feel better. I would literally do *anything* if I knew it would make you feel better. Okay?”

Richie’s crying now; he blinks back tears as he nods.

“Okay”, Eddie continues. “So, please Rich, *bother* me. If you’re not feeling well, or if you’re having a shitty day, please bother me. I want to be the one you come to cause I – I want to take care of you.”, Eddie says tenderly, caressing Richie’s cheek.

Richie squeezes his eyes shut and ducks his head into the crook of Eddie’s neck. Eddie winds his arms around Richie’s shoulders, submerging one hand into Richie’s hair. They stay like that for a while, their arms wrapped around each other as their tears dry on their faces.

Finally, Richie pulls back, his face splotchy from crying. “You do know that I’m going to use that against you, right?”

One of Eddie’s eyebrows quirks up. “Use what?”

“That you want me to bother you.” A grin tugs at Richie’s lips. “I’ll bother you every damn day from now if that’s what you want.”

Eddie blinks stupidly at Richie, and then after a beat, throws his head back in laughter. “Oh my god, Richie! FUCK YOU!”

Still laughing, Eddie and Richie cuddle into each other. Slowly, the laughter dies away and is replaced by their soft, rhythmic breathing as they fall asleep in each other’s arms.

### **Author's Note:**

I hope everyone enjoyed reading this! After writing "It Was Always You", I just wanted to write some tooth-rotting fluff of my two favorite boys.

Please subscribe to the series or to me, as an author, if you want to get updates on the series. This story does hint at what the next story is going to be about. ;) I can't promise that I'm going to be as fast as updating the series as I was with "It Was Always You", but I promise I'm working on it!